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Release 2010/12/02 :
CIA-RDP85T00875R001100100

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CCI No. 2161/71

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
27 November 1971

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

India-Pakistan Situation Report
(As of 1230 EST)

1. Minor skirmishes and artillery exchanges appear to be continuing at widely scattered points along the India-East Pakistani border. The press reports continued cross-border shelling in the vicinity of Balurghat, the headquarters town of West Dinajpur District in West Bengal. Last Thursday, Indian troops launched a "defensive" strike into East Pakistan in this region. Fighting also continues around Jessore, and reports indicate both sides will continue to struggle for control of this strategic center. In the southeast corner of East Pakistan, clashes persist in the Belonia salient and near the army stronghold of Feni.

2. The US consulate in Dacca reports that tension in Dacca has risen noticeably as a result of recent Indo-Pakistani border clashes. Two surprise curfews in seven days--aimed at keeping the Mukti Bahini off balance--and repeated nightly bombings by the guerrillas have reinforced uncertainty among the populace. Widespread susceptibility to rumors, a decline in the number of people and vehicles on the streets, and signs of hoarding are evident.

3. Today, Prime Minister Gandhi flew to the state of Rajasthan to address the troops and villagers in areas close to the India/West Pakistan border. Tomorrow she will travel north to Punjab State for similar purposes. Next week she is expected to visit Assam and other areas in the eastern front.

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6. Last night, a "special envoy" from Yahya, R. T. Roy, met with Ceylon's Prime Minister Bandaranike to present Yahya's assessment of the Indo-Pakistani crisis and possibly to suggest that Mrs. Bandaranike might in some way assist in easing the situation. Mrs. Bandaranaike is seeking new prestige in the international arena and might consider such a role attractive. Roy represents a Buddhist minority group in East Pakistan and thus is well suited to present Pakistan's case to Buddhist countries. Thailand, Nepal, and Burma are also on his itinerary.

7. At the UN there are signs of additional interest in the possibility of formal Security Council consideration of the Indo-Pakistani crisis. On Friday, Italy joined the Belgians in efforts to elicit interest in Security Council involvement. Paris has also indicated some interest in council action--a marked change from France's heretofore reserved attitude toward UN involvement in the crisis. French ambassadors in Islamabad and New Delhi have been asked for their views on a Security Council role with the idea of obtaining some sort of UN presence on the frontiers.

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